

## **Product Bulletin for Pitney Bowes Customers Purchasing GreatSchools Ratings**

### **-March 2020-**

Please note the following changes and/or updates made by GreatSchools for the March release:

- 1) GreatSchools periodically removes reviews that are 10+ years old. This has been done on the March update, so GreatSchools community data files may be smaller in size (the "gs-parent-ratings" and "gs-parent-review" files).
- 2) In XML, entity references (including '&') must be escaped. For example, the entity '&#39;' should be written as '&amp;39;' to be properly parsed. However, we noticed that in the flat (txt) files, we were also escaping ampersands in this way. This is unnecessary since those files are not intended to be parsed by XML parsers. Therefore, we changed it so these entities are now written as '&#39;' to the flat/txt files. XML files are unchanged and will continue to have '&amp;#39;' written to them.

### **-February 2020-**

Please note that the following files may show file size decreases. This is due to GreatSchools planned data maintenance:

- local-gs-parent-review-feed
- local-gs-parent-review-feed-flat
- local-gs-parent-rating-feed-flat

Additionally, as noted in December 2019, the `breakdown_id_crosswalk`, `proficiency_id_crosswalk`, and the `test_id_crosswalk` have been removed from file delivery.

### **-December 2019-**

Please note that the `breakdown_id_crosswalk`, `proficiency_id_crosswalk`, and `test_id_crosswalk` files will be removed from the product delivery starting with the February 2020 product release.

### **-November 2019-**

You may notice a change in the values for the students per counselor ratio. This is an expected change and is a result of a correction in the November feeds from an erroneous value that was loaded in a previous month.

The Maine Department of Education has changed the structure of both their school-level and district-level state id's. GreatSchools has provided school and district crosswalk files to assist you in matching between the old and new state id's.

- The "old\_state-id" value refers to the outdated id's (included in Oct 2019 and former releases).
- The "state-id" value refers to the new (current) id's which will be included in this Nov 2019 feed release and future releases.
- The crosswalk files also contain other data (entity name, nces-id, etc.) to further assist in successful matching.

Note that the following data feed changes have been implemented this month:

- 1) The flat local-gs-new-test-feed .txt files currently contain a column labelled "most-recent-year". In November this column will start to include year values.
- 2) A new element "state-abbrev", will be introduced within all the test files (both flat .txt's and XMLs). Specific file names are listed below. This new element will allow clients to more easily differentiate data for tests that may have the same test name/abbrev but are not administered in the same state.
  - a. Flat files:
    - i. local-gs-new-test-feed-flat
    - ii. local-gs-new-test-result-feed-flat
  - b. XML:
    - i. local-gs-new-test-feed

#### **-October 2019-**

Note that in the November GreatSchools data feed, the following will be changing:

- 3) The flat local-gs-new-test-feed .txt files currently contain a column labelled "most-recent-year". In November this column will start to include year values.
- 4) A new element "state-abbrev", will be introduced within all the test files (both flat .txt's and XMLs). Specific file names are listed below. This new element will allow clients to more easily differentiate data for tests that may have the same test name/abbrev but are not administered in the same state.
  - a. Flat files:
    - i. local-gs-new-test-feed-flat
    - ii. local-gs-new-test-result-feed-flat
  - b. XML:
    - i. local-gs-new-test-feed

#### **-May 2019-**

In an effort to eliminate discriminatory or otherwise vulgar review from the data website and data feed, GreatSchools has removed ~5,000 reviews nationally, which is reflected in the data this month. Specifically, the gs-parent-review-feed xml and the gs-parent-review-feed-flat txt files.

Note the following **.zip** file name changes:

- local-gs-test-feed-flat is now local-gs-new-test-feed-flat
- local-gs-test-result-feed-flat is now local-gs-new-test-result-feed-flat
- local-gs-test-feed is now local-gs-new-test-feed

Note the following **file** name changes:

- local-gs-test-feed-flat-STATE is now local-gs-new-test-feed-STATE (ex. local-gs-new-test-feed-AK)
- local-gs-test-result-feed-flat-STATE is now local-gs-new-test-result-feed-STATE (ex. local-gs-new-test-result-feed-AK)

#### **-April 2019-**

Starting in May's feed release, GreatSchools will no longer include district level ratings in the GreatSchools data feeds. As the new multiple-measure GreatSchools 1-10 Rating methodology continues to evolve, the process of rolling school rating data up to the district level is now producing a misleading picture of district quality. As a non-profit organization with a social mission to help parents find the right school for their child, GreatSchools biggest commitment is to serve families and provide them with the best and most actionable data. Continuing to provide the district ratings as they exist

today is no longer in the best interest of parents and students. For that reason GreatSchools has removed district ratings from our website [greatschools.org](https://greatschools.org), and **they ask that our partners remove district ratings from their products as soon as possible.**

With that being said, GreatSchools absolutely understand the importance of district level data and are working internally to create a new system for capturing district performance. GreatSchools data scientists are in the beginning stages of developing that product and with the aim to have replacement data available in 2020. GreatSchools will be sure to stay in touch and share updates with partners as they move forward and finalize strategy.

GreatSchools is committed to providing you, your stakeholders, and parents across the country with the information they need to make important school choice decisions for their families. GreatSchools appreciates any and all feedback.

**-March 2019-**

AR, OH, KY, ID, NE, HI, OK, VT, MT, MN, and WY have been updated to 2019 data, however the rating description does not reflect 2019, but instead 2017. This is an error and will be corrected in the April GreatSchools data feeds.

Starting in May 2019 GreatSchools is changing their test score data. This change will affect both the Flat test feed data files as well as the XML. This means that some datatype names will change, and some will be removed altogether. Specific to the XML feed, each result will be contained within the test. Additionally, the XSD schema files will also be changing.

The new test feed flat file data dictionary will change to the following:

**GreatSchools - New Test Feed, Flat File Dictionary**

| Data  | Notes  | local-greatschools-feed | local-gs-new-test-feed | local-gs-new-test-result-feed | local-gs-new-test-subgroup-feed | Schema Element Name  |
|---|--|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>IDENTIFIERS</b>  |  |                         |                        |                               |                                 |  |
| Universal ID  | 2 digit state FIPS code + 5 digit GS ID; districts have a 1 in front. UniversalDistrictId's ending in 5 digit 0's have no corresponding district record (ie private schools) | x                       |                        | x                             | x                               | universal-id   |
| GreatSchools ID   | unique within each state; also includes a url to SPP overview  | x                       |                        |                               |                                 | gs-id  |
| NCES code   |  | x                       |                        |                               |                                 | nces-code  |
| State ID  |  | x                       |                        |                               |                                 | state-id   |
| Entity (preschool,school,district,state)                                |  | x                       |                        |                               |                                 | entity   |
| <b>ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE</b>   |  |                         |                        |                               |                                 |  |
| Test name   | element of "test"  |                         | x                      |                               |                                 | test-name  |
| Test abbreviation   | element of "test"  |                         | x                      | x                             | x                               | test-abbrev  |
| Scale   | element of "test"  |                         | x                      |                               |                                 | scale  |
| Year  | element of "test"  |                         | x                      | x                             | x                               | most-recent-year; year   |
| Grade   | element of "test"  |                         |                        | x                             | x                               | grade  |
| Descriptions of tests   | element of "test"  |                         | x                      |                               |                                 | description  |
| Test results - % scoring in each proficiency band, by grade and subject | A blank proficiency-band represents % scoring at or above proficient   |                         |                        | x                             | x                               | score (universal-id;test-abbrev;year;subject;grade;score;proficiency-band;number-tested) |
| Historical test scores (up to 4 years)                                  |  |                         |                        | x                             | x                               |  |
| Subgroup test results   | Provided upon request.   |                         |                        |                               | x                               | breakdowns   |
| Test score page url (for district, this is the "Overview" url)          |  | x                       |                        |                               |                                 | test-scores-url  |

Further details will be provided as they become available.

**-January 2019-**

Starting in the April 2019 GreatSchools product release both the local-gs-census-feed-flat and the local-greatschools-feed files the following new attribute fields will be available:

- Students per teacher
- Students per counselor
- % male students
- % female students
- % of teachers with 3 or more years' experience
- % of full-time teachers who are certified
- Average teacher salary

**-November 2018-**

Please be advised that the 'scale' tag now allows for 0-length in the gs-test-feed XML files.

**-September 2018-**

Please be advised that specific GreatSchools IDs have been changed as a result of changes to GreatSchools data storage procedures.

You will notice some changes to the IDs included in the gs-test-feed, the gs-test-result-feed. As noted in August, GreatSchools has provided crosswalk files (text files) that assist making any transitions. The specific IDs that will need to transition are the breakdown\_id, the proficiency\_id, and the test\_id.

Additional changes by GreatSchools in the September 2018 feeds include:

- Values under the Scale datatype will be listed as "% level 3, level 4, level 5" instead of "% level 3, 4, or 5".
- GreatSchools is no longer reporting level-code-name data (e, m, h). GreatSchools will now only be providing specific grades under the "grade-name" datatype.
- GreatSchools completed a general clean-up of the breakdown-name values. E.g. "All" -> "All Students", and "Multiracial" -> "Two or more races".
- GreatSchools removed some breakdowns that do not appear on our website, e.g. "Migrant".
- Some preschools with test data were incorrectly being included in the GreatSchools feeds. They have been removed.

#### **-August 2018-**

Please be advised that starting in September some GreatSchools IDs will be changed as a result of changes GreatSchools is making to its data storage procedures.

The following feeds will be affected by this:

- gs-test-feed
- gs-test-result-feed

The ID's that will be changing:

- breakdown\_id
- proficiency\_id
- test\_id

GreatSchools will be providing crosswalk files to enable users to link the old ID's with the new ID's.

#### **-December 2017-**

GreatSchools is enhancing the methodology used for generating their 1-10 school rating system. As before, these scores incorporate multiple measures of school quality, and will now include measures of educational equity. While these changes to the rating won't affect delivery or format of the product elements, some scores may change in response to the new methodology.

The details surrounding this change are as follows:

The 1-10 School Ratings have previously been based on a combination of 4 key factors – test scores, student or academic progress, college readiness and advanced courses. GreatSchools is now adding two additional measures:

**Equity Rating** – How well the school serves the needs of all students. The Equity Rating reflects the academic performance level of disadvantaged students within a school and the in-school gaps in academic performance between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. GreatSchools defines disadvantaged students as those students who comprise race/ethnicity and economic subgroups that show persistent gaps across schools, subgroup pairs, grades, and subjects within the state.

**Discipline and Attendance Flag** – The discipline and attendance flags use data from the Civil Rights Data Collection to identify schools that have high rates of suspension and absenteeism as well as large differences in these rates by racial/ethnic group. GreatSchools “flags” schools that have high rates of suspension and absenteeism as well as large differences in these rates by racial/ethnic group. If a school has a Discipline or Attendance flag, it will factor into the school’s Summary Rating.

As of September 21<sup>st</sup> 2017 GreatSchools has updated school ratings on their website for the state of California, and are continuing to update nationwide. While the scores are being updated, an end user comparing the 1-10 rating between the data published by Pitney Bowes and the data available on the GreatSchools website for a school *may show different scores*. GreatSchools provides Pitney Bowes with updated scores on a monthly basis and the schedule below shows when the new scoring methodology will be reflected in the Pitney Bowes monthly deliverable:

| Monthly Release                 | Methodology                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| September (released end of Sep) | Old Methodology for all states |
| October (released end of Oct)   | Old Methodology for all states |
| November (released end of Nov)  | New Methodology for all states |

For more information about GreatSchools ratings please check out the GreatSchools Website ([www.greatschools.org/gk/ratings/](http://www.greatschools.org/gk/ratings/)) and If you have specific questions or concerns regarding your Pitney Bowes products please contact our support team directly by calling 800.762.5158 or by emailing [software.support@pb.com](mailto:software.support@pb.com).